

Cycle B Second Sunday in Ordinary Time – January 14, 2024

“What are you looking for?”

All of today's readings stress how being called by God is linked to our openness, a healthy curiosity and a willingness to search. Only those who are open, curious and search will discover, find and grow. Stay open!

Prayer (Psalm 40)

Leader: I waited patiently for the Lord;
he inclined to me and heard my cry.

**All: God drew me up from the desolate pit,
and set my feet upon a rock.**

Leader: God put a new song in my mouth,
a song of praise to our God.

**All: Many will see and fear,
and put their trust in the Lord.**



First Reading - 1 Samuel 3:3b-10,19

Samuel was dedicated to God at birth. Yet, in this passage we encounter Samuel being awakened three times by the voice of God's deeper summons. Three times Samuel answers, "Here I am." Samuel desires to answer this call but is unable to do so on his own. The clarity of Samuel's call to the vocation of prophetic ministry is only discerned with the help of Eli and the disposition of a listening heart on the part of Samuel.

1. Who are the wisdom figures that serve as guiding lights in your personal search of fulfillment and meaning for your life? How have they helped you find your way?
2. Eli tells Samuel to answer the voice in the night with the words, "Speak Lord your servant is listening." How do you make quiet space in the busyness of life to hear God's voice?
3. We are all called to be prophets. What is a prophet's task in today's world?

Second Reading - 1 Corinthians 6:13c-15a, 17-20

Paul writes his letter to the people of the Corinthian church at a time when general the climate in the city of Corinth was one of sexual immorality. Paul reminds us that our physical bodies are not our own, but belong to Christ and are temples of the Holy Spirit. Both body and soul are destined for salvation and eternity. Saint Pope John Paul II captured the essence of Paul's teaching in the universal call to holiness of all the baptized.

1. How does Paul's understanding of the body compare with that of the messages we receive about our bodies in today's culture?
2. How can we help one another retrieve a deep personal sense of the sacredness of the body in a culture that to a great extent has lost this understanding?

Gospel - John 1:35-42

Jesus' first words in John's Gospel are "What are you looking for?" He next invites his inquirers to "come and see." And so it is that the disciples enter into relationship with, and come to stay with Jesus. Peter needs the help of John and Andrew to find his way to Jesus and fully understand the vocation to which he is being called. John and Andrew need John the Baptist to point the way to Jesus.

1. What does the Gospel tell us about God's way of calling us? In what ways have you experienced God's call to "*come and see*"?
2. How does your family and/or your faith community help one another to recognize each other's gifts and/or calling?
3. In what ways have you heard or experienced Jesus' question, "What are you looking for?" How did you answer his invitation?

LIVING THE WORD:

Our vocation is comprised of: a) who God is calling us to become (our identity); b) how God calls us to become this unique self (lifestyle i.e. married life, single life, priesthood or consecrated religious) and, c) what God is calling us to do for others (ministry). During this week, take 20-30 minutes of quiet time to reflect on / or journal a description of your understanding of your vocation.

PRAYING THE WORD:

Intercession: We pray for one another and our parish community that we may learn to foster a spirit of openness, understanding and curiosity in which God's calling voice may be heard.

Invite personal intentions ending with the Our Father....

CLOSING PRAYER:

Leader: Loving God,
You call to us always.
Going about our busy lives
And being asleep to the signs of your presence,
It is easy to miss your call.
When we stop and take time,
When we awaken to your voice,
We acknowledge our desire and our need
To live in, with and through Jesus.

All: **Help us, Lord, to re-orient, and to root
our mind and heart in your holy Word. Amen.**

Leader: In the peace of Christ let us offer each other a sign of peace.